

## **Tobacco Resolution Unanimously Approved By Upstate City Council**

### ***Issue***

“While approximately 80 Anderson restaurants currently prohibit smoking inside, we would like it to become the ‘in’ thing to be smoke-free,” according to Dr. Marshall Meadors, an Anderson physician and Tobacco Free Anderson coalition member.

According to the 2006 Surgeon General’s report, *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*, there is also no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke causes serious diseases such as lung cancer and respiratory illnesses such as asthma, and is also responsible for up to 1,110 deaths in South Carolina. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and illness in South Carolina. According to the 2007 Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 21.9 percent of South Carolina adults smoke cigarettes.

While numerous efforts have been implemented to help eliminate secondhand smoke in public areas, such as separating smokers from non-smokers or installing high-tech ventilation systems in buildings, these efforts have been proven to not to effectively eliminate secondhand smoke exposure.

### ***Intervention***

In an effort to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke and protect the public from its harmful health consequences, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control’s Region 1, through funding from the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant and in partnership with the Tobacco Free Anderson coalition, wrote a comprehensive tobacco resolution to present to the Anderson City Council. As numerous research reveals:

- Smoke-free workplace policies do not have an adverse economic impact on the hospitality industry; and
- Smoke-free public places and workplace policies have been shown to be effective in reducing second hand smoke exposure.

The City of Anderson tobacco resolution not only noted the importance and value of workplace and public policy in relation to secondhand smoke exposure, but it also highlighted the goal of protecting the public’s health and welfare by encouraging these entities to provide a smoke-free environment.

### ***Impact***

On December 10, 2007, Anderson City Council unanimously approved the tobacco resolution, which encourages public places to provide a non-smoking environment.

- While the resolution does not prohibit smoking in public places, it does encourage local business and restaurant owners to become smoke-free for the health of their employees and patrons;
- Tobacco Free Anderson members and its supporters see the resolution as the first step toward making Anderson smoke-free; and
- Tobacco Free Anderson coalition is optimistic that since the city smoke-free ordinance was recently upheld in the neighboring city of Greenville, S.C., that efforts to see the entire county of Anderson become smoke-free are likely in the future.

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